

What a Pedometer does and doesn't do

– How Moderate Daily Physical Activity Can Benefit You –

A pedometer's basic purpose is to count steps. Some models use preprogrammed formulas to convert steps to distance based on average stride lengths that you program into the pedometer. Some pedometers also convert steps to calories burned using other formulas. These conversion formulas are unique to each brand of pedometer and do not take into account age, sex, or intensity of activity. So, both calorie and distance conversions are estimates – they give you a rough idea, but are not exact.

The first electronic pedometer was developed by the Japanese. They are credited with the first studies on “10,000 Steps A Day”. Getting 10,000 steps in daily is equal to walking about 5 miles. Studies show people who use a pedometer and reach 10,000 steps a day loss weight and improve health conditions. The only reason to use a pedometer is — to motivator and “*Just Move It*”. Also, people who begin an exercise program become more conscious of and careful with their diets – further helping with weight loss and improved health.

The health benefits of daily physical movement are well documented and include reducing the risk of developing or dying from coronary heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure. Moreover, these benefits can be achieved with regular moderate physical activity such as walking.

The Surgeon General, in an historic report published in 1996, found that:

- More than 60% of adults do not achieve the recommended amount of physical activity, and 25% of adults are not physically active at all.
- Among young people aged 12-21, almost 50% are not vigorously active on a regular basis. Physical activity declines with age during adolescence.
- High school students' enrollment in daily physical education classes dropped from 42% in 1991 to 25% in 1995. Only 19% of all high school students are physically active for 20 minutes or more in physical education classes every day during the school week.

Since this report was published, recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that the incidence of obesity in both children and adults has steadily increased. Obesity alone kills some 220,000 a year in the United States and Canada and is a contributing factor in many more. A recent survey reported that 30% of adults in the United States are clinically obese and almost 65% are overweight (an increase from 56% in 1988).

Adapted from: <http://www.new-lifestyles.com/DIGIWALKER/whyUse.html>